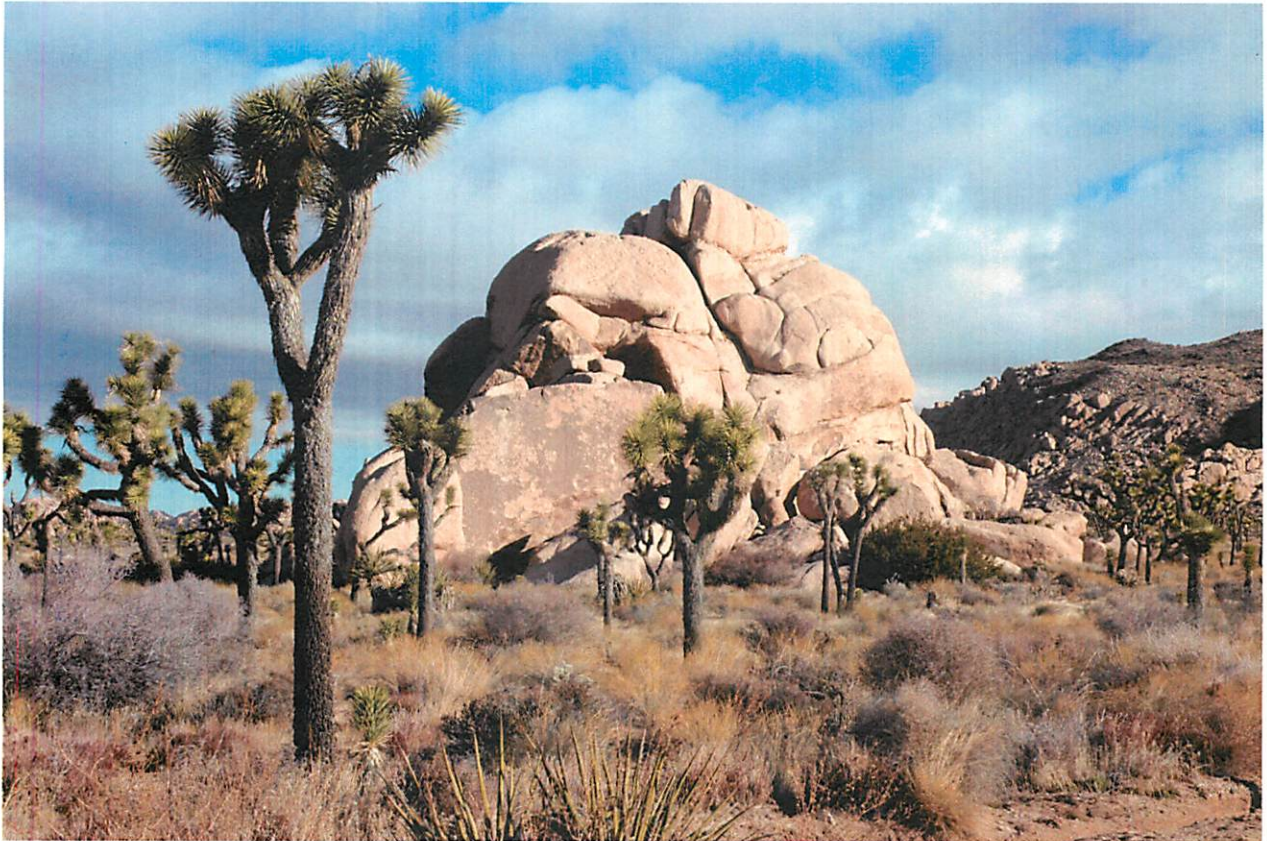


Joshua Tree National Park



Fee Program Operations Manual

FEE PROGRAM OPERATIONS MANUAL

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Date: 2/1/2010

FEE PROGRAM GUIDELINES JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

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I. Introduction:

These park-specific guidelines are intended to be used as a reference for fee collection operations specific to Joshua Tree National Park. This document will serve as a manual for fee operation and a supplement to RM-22, the National Park Service's Fee Collection Guidelines. The majority of our direction comes from RM-22, which provides policy and management direction for establishment, and efficient, cost-effective operations of the Service wide recreation fee program. All employees with fee collection responsibilities should be familiar with and have access to this Park Specific Fee Operations Manual along with the latest edition of RM-22.

II. History of the National Park Service and Its Mission

The National Park Service was established as a Bureau of the Department of the Interior by the Organic Act of 1916. The basic objective of the National Park Service (NPS) is summed up in this often repeated paragraph from that act, which states:

“to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. . . “

This paragraph clearly indicates a dual responsibility:

We are required to protect all of the park's resources as well as to “provide for the enjoyment” of those who visit. All aspects of this dual responsibility rests on the first part, which is the protection of its resources.

While these objectives may seem somewhat incompatible, it is possible, with proper protection and planning to provide visitor enjoyment and appreciation, while still retaining the protection of basic, primitive wilderness, scenic values, natural, cultural and historic features, plants and wildlife.

Within the mission and vision of the National Park Service, each park has a vision to own. In Joshua Tree National Park, we have a defined mission, created by the staff for how the Division of Visitor Resource and Protection will most effectively carry out the NPS mission.

That vision is as follows:

“We are a team that actively and efficiently preserves the natural and cultural resources in Joshua Tree National Park. We perform our team responsibilities through professional contacts with the public and coworkers. We lead the public, through education, to a better understanding of the park's significance and their role in protecting the park's resources. We are committed to financial stewardship and compliance with Federal laws and National Park Service policies in carrying out our duties.”

2.1 History of Fee Collection in the National Park Service

The charging of fees in the areas administered by the National Park Service is based on the principle that persons who use, and enjoy the services, the resources and the facilities provided by the parks, should bear at least a portion of the cost of providing them. Congressional policy in 1951 established that any services furnished to any person by the Federal Government should be self-sustaining to the fullest extent possible, therefore reducing the cost to the general taxpayer.

Executive Order No. 11200 of February 23, 1965, put into effect the Land and Water Conservation Act, which authorized the use of recreation fees as a source of financing to meet State and Federal recreation needs. Public Law No. 92-347 amended the Act on July 1, 1972 to permit the collecting agency to use the fees it collected for such programs as the enhancement of other park operations.

On January 1, 1994 a new \$10 charge as a one time fee was introduced for the Golden Age Passport, which was previously free. This pass could be sold to seniors who resided or was domiciled in the United States.

On January 1, 1995 the Fee Demonstration Program was enacted by Congress, allowing 100 National Parks to increase their fees and keep a percentage of the money for Park improvements.

The most recent Act relating to fees is called "The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act", which was passed in the 2005 Omnibus Appropriations bill signed into law by President George W. Bush on December 8, 2004. There were two great benefits to visitors of Federal lands:

1. A majority of fees collected would be reinvested back to the site of collection to enhance visitor services and reduce the backlog of maintenance needs.
2. The Act would provide an interagency fee program that reduces confusion over differing fee programs and passes by reducing four national passes down to one.

2.2 History of Fee Collection at Joshua Tree National Park

In 1936, Joshua Tree was designated as a National Monument by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This designation was primarily enacted due to the efforts of Minerva Hoyt of Pasadena, California.

On February 2, 1987, Joshua Tree National Monument began collecting entrance fees in response to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965.

On May 23, 1995 Joshua Tree was allowed to participate in the Fee Demo Program. The entrance fee increased from \$5 to \$10, and the yearly pass increased from \$15 to \$25. Then

on March 1, 2006 the entrance fee was increased from \$10 to \$15 per vehicle and the annual pass was increased from \$25 to \$30.

On December 15, 2003 registration at Hidden Valley and Ryan campgrounds began; to be followed on January 7, 2004 at Jumbo Rock, Belle, and White Tank campgrounds. A \$5 per night, per site camping fee began to be charged at these campgrounds on February 17, 2004.

On January 1, 2007 the Interagency Pass Program was introduced, increasing the annual pass for all Federal Fee Areas to \$80. This would replace the National Park Pass introduced on April 18, 2000 for \$50 and the Golden Eagle which sold for \$65. It was called The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, which expands the National Park Pass by authorizing a new "America the Beautiful – National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Pass" This pass covers entrance fees and standard amenity recreation fees for all Federal recreation lands and waters where a fee is charged.

On March 1, 2007 camping fees were increased from \$5 per night to \$10 per night at Hidden Valley, Ryan, Jumbo Rock, Belle and White Tank campgrounds; and \$10 per night to \$15 per night at Cottonwood, Indian Cove and Black Rock campgrounds. Fees for group campsites increased \$5 per night.

2.3 Facts from the Latest Statistics about Joshua Tree National Park:

Natural Features:

794,726 acres and 585,040 acres of wilderness

Elevations range from 536 to 5814 feet

There are 712 plant species, 40 reptile species, 41 mammal species, 240 bird species, 1 federally and state threatened species (desert tortoise), 1 federally endangered species (Coachella Valley milk vetch), and 26 species of special concern.

Cultural and Historic Features

There are 717 archeological sites, 92 historic structures, 2 cultural landscapes, 230,129 items in the museum collection and 1 paleontological area.

Facilities

There's 93 miles of paved roads, 106 miles of unpaved roads, 191 miles of hiking trails, 32 trailheads, 911 regulatory and 123 trail signs, 9 campgrounds, 10 picnic areas with 38 picnic sites, 10 water treatment facilities, 9 solar power stations, 4 maintenance facilities, 8 employee housing units, 95 vehicles in fleet, and 4 visitor centers.

III. Responsibilities of Park Fee Staff

There are seven fee collection stations serving Joshua Tree National Park. Oasis Visitor Center, Indian Cove station and campground, Joshua Tree Visitor Center, Black Rock Visitor Center and campground, West Entrance, North Entrance and Cottonwood Visitor

Center and campground. Visitor Use Assistants and Interpretive Park Rangers operate these stations often with the help of volunteers or National Park Association employees. A Remit Clerk, a First Line Supervisor and a Fee Program Manager make up the remainder of the Fee staff.

The Park's Fee staff has the basic responsibilities of representing the National Park Service, as well as Joshua Tree National Park in particular to its visitors. The primary activity is to provide excellent customer service while giving out park information and collecting fees for entrance and passes. Accountability of inventory and fees collected is of paramount importance in their day to day duties.

The various responsibilities are outlined in detail in the numerous SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) found in the Appendix of this guide.

3.1 Uniform Policy and Behavior While in Uniform

As a uniformed representative of the National Park Service (NPS), you carry responsibilities not only for those things you do or fail to do, but also the perception we create with the public. You will convey a high degree of integrity and competence if you wear the uniform as it is meant to be worn. In the NPS uniform, you are projecting an image of a national treasure, and the competence of each of us who help to manage and preserve it. If that image is seen as unacceptable, the national image will suffer as well as the local one.

Standards for those who wear the uniform include such things as appearance, grooming, personal cleanliness and most of all attitudes. To each visitor or local community resident, you are projecting an image that is larger than any one person.

Uniform items should never be mixed with non-uniform items. When choosing the items of the uniform that you should order, you are only authorized to purchase items pertaining to the uniform category that is authorized for your position.

At Joshua Tree National Park, the **Management Directive JOTR-16 (See Appendix)** gives guidance to which uniform items are authorized. Not all items provided by the uniform vendor are acceptable for wear. Be sure to check the Directive before making your order. At Joshua Tree National Park, the summer uniform is considered the year-round uniform, although winter uniforms may be worn whenever cooler temperatures make it necessary. Mixing of uniforms is never permissible.

The Directive states that "the authorized apparel for law enforcement patrol and fee collectors is Class A Field twill pants for summer or winter, depending upon the weather. Class A Dress is appropriate when assigned to court, public meetings, public presentations, and other similar activities. The Class A Field jeans or shorts may be worn when engaged in maintenance-type duties or backcountry patrol. A flat hat should be worn when assigned to entrance fee stations. An appropriate NPS uniform hat should be worn during all outdoor visitor contacts, except for critical incidents in law enforcement and search and rescue."

It should be in the interest of all uniformed employees to be acquainted with its information.

3.2 Reference Manual 43 – Uniforms, Applicable Excerpts for Fee Collection Officers:

All Uniformed Employees other than Emergency Personnel

These uniformed employees are in the public eye (occasionally or frequently) and therefore, have an affirmative responsibility to maintain the positive and neutral image of uniformed NPS employees. Proper personal appearance emphasizes professional competence and expertise.

Standards:

- Beards will be neatly trimmed, combed, clean, and free of ornaments. Moustaches must be neatly trimmed. Beards must not interfere with regularly assigned duties and/or be a safety hazard in the performance of those duties.
- Hair must be clean, and neat. Hair length must not interfere with regularly assigned duties and/or be a safety hazard in the performance of those duties. Hair must not obscure either the badge or name bar/tag. Any form of haircut or hairstyle that draws more attention than the uniform and detracts from the wearer's authority, such as cuts that produce patterns, designs or contrasting lengths, is prohibited. Sideburns must be no longer than the bottom of the ear.
- Coloration not normally found in human hair, or any coloration which is employed to produce unnatural hair patterns through contrasting hair colors is prohibited.
- Makeup and adornment will conform to the kind typically worn by members of service or professional organizations. Neither makeup nor adornment will detract from the uniform, interfere with job performance or present a safety hazard.

Exemptions: Employees engaged in costumed interpretation may be exempted from these standards with the approval of the appropriate division chief.

Exceptions:

Exemptions may be granted to the above personal adornment limitations and appearance standards only in accordance with D.O. #43, Section 5.3.3.

Exceptions occur only where regional or local standards are developed. To establish a regional or local standard, the appropriate manager must survey a minimum of three other groups having similar public service functions. Groups may include such organizations as teacher associations, law enforcement agencies, civic and service organizations, corporations, professional groups, or associations. Standards must be applied to categories of NPS employees. For example, three surveyed standards from educational and tour organizations that apply to employees in interpretation; three standards from public service corporations that apply to administration, maintenance, resource management, and interpretation. When survey standards have been documented, the appearance standard developed for the region/cluster/park will reflect the norm or median standard of this survey. The regional director will approve this standard and it will be attached to the standards of effected park(s). The chosen standard must be applied throughout the park, cluster or region.

Employees on detail assignments, team assignments, or other temporary duty, will comply with the receiving area's standards.

Conduct and Bearing Standards

Regular Duty

The distinctive NPS uniform is so closely related to the mission and traditions of the agency that it is virtually synonymous with both the agency's purpose and personnel. Uniformed employees are held in high esteem by the public as guardians of the Nation's irreplaceable natural and cultural heritage; they are also highly regarded as role models who have many attributes Americans prize including: courtesy, service, integrity, self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Employees who wear the *Service* or *Field Uniform*, whether commissioned or not, also wear a badge which connotes a certain level of formal authority. Accordingly, uniformed employees of the NPS are held to high standards of conduct and behavior, and are expected to comport themselves or *manage our actions* accordingly.

Prohibited Activities

Although proper behavior is expected from uniformed employees under all circumstances, employees are specifically prohibited from the following activities while in uniform or wearing a readily identifiable uniform component:

- Purchasing or consuming alcoholic beverages, whether on or off duty.
- Smoking or carrying cigars, pipes or cigarettes in their mouths or chewing tobacco while in public view.
- Gambling in any form while on or off duty.
- Participating in or attending any demonstration or public event wherein the wearing of the uniform could be construed as agency support for a particular issue, position, or political party.
- Sleeping while on duty and in public view.

Public Events

Uniformed employees of the NPS participate in hundreds of public events and ceremonies each year. These events impose higher standards of uniformity, conduct and bearing than normal duty because of the conspicuousness of the NPS uniform in public settings, particularly in the presence of the media.

General:

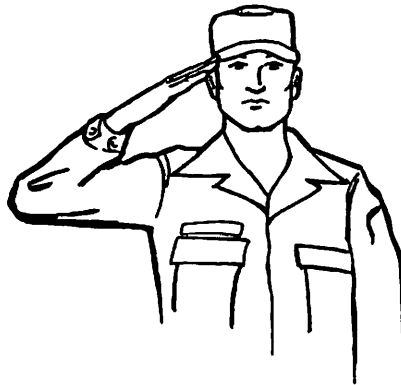
It is imperative that uniformed employees look as similar as possible at special events. A special effort will be made to have all uniformed employees either wear a prescribed and published "uniform of the day" or meet together to assure that their uniforms conform. It is more important that uniforms are identical than a particular standard be followed to the letter

(e.g. one employee lacks gloves, then all should forego them). A "stand up" inspection by the person managing the event or his or her representative will be conducted before the event begins.

- All metal components - badges, nametags, and USNPS collar ornaments should be highly lustrous and properly aligned.
- Garments must be clean and pressed. All persons authorized to wear ranger hats must wear those hats except in extremely cold or windy weather.
- Shoes, belts, and hatbands must be highly polished. Keys and accessory items on belts are prohibited.
- Uniformed employees who will take part in ceremonies should rehearse movements together to assure that they conform to each other.

Particular attention should be paid to the following:

- Hand salutes - The right hand is raised sharply with fingers and thumb extended and joined. The tip of the right index finger is placed on the brim of the hat slightly above the right eye with the hand and wrist straight. The outer edge of the hand should be tilted slightly downward so that neither the back of the hand nor the palm is clearly visible from the front.
- Standing at attention - The person stands erect with eyes straight ahead, feet spread at a 45-degree angle, and hands naturally curled with thumbs along trouser seams.
- Standing at parade rest - The person stands erect with eyes straight ahead, feet spread at shoulder width, arms behind the back, hand in hand.



Outdoor Ceremonies

All uniformed employees should salute with hats on under the following circumstances:

- Playing of national anthems (United States or other countries). Face the appropriate flag (if visible) or the music (if flag is not visible) and salute. Hold the salute until the last note is played.
- Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance - face the flag and salute.
- Presentation of colors - salute when the flag is approximately 6 feet away until it is 6 feet past you.
- Raising and lowering of the flag - salute from the moment it starts up the pole until it reaches the top, or from the time it begins descending until it reaches the base of the flagstaff. If flown at half-staff, hold the salute until the flag is lowered to half-staff **after** being raised to the top.

- Raising and lowering of the flag when alone - stand back from the flagstaff and salute the flag before lowering and after raising.
- Playing of "Taps" or "Hail to the Chief" - face the music and salute. Hold the salute until the last note is played.
- Passage of the President in a parade or motorcade - salute as the vehicle passes.

During prayers and benedictions, **all** uniformed employees should remain covered (i.e., the hat remains on the head) with heads bowed. Hands should be held together in front. In all other circumstances, emulate the military if they are represented.

Indoor Ceremonies

1. **All** uniformed employees should remove their hats, stand at attention, and face the flag or music, but **not** salute. Those wearing billed-caps should hold them by the bill in their left hands; those wearing ranger hats should grip the front edge of the rim with their left hands and rest the body on their left forearms, keeping them level with the ground. These procedures will apply in the following circumstances:
 - Playing of national anthems (United States or other countries)
 - Recitation of Pledge of Allegiance
 - Presentation of colors
 - Raising and lowering of the flag
 - Playing of "Taps" or "Hail to the Chief"
2. Uniformed employees should rise and stand at attention but **not** salute when the President of the United States passes.
3. Uniformed employees should put their right hands over their hearts during the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. During prayers and benedictions, uniformed employees should remove their hats (if they haven't already done so), hold them as noted above, and bow their heads.
5. In all other circumstances, emulate the military if they are represented.
 - Funerals:
 1. All of the above indoor and outdoor protocols apply.
 2. Uniformed employees may wear a ¾-inch wide black band horizontally across the middle of the badge in tribute to public safety officers killed in the line of duty or NPS employees who died or were killed while in the performance of their duties. The band may be worn from the time of death until end of funeral ceremony.



3. The superintendent, regional director, or director, as appropriate, will stipulate when the band is to be worn.
4. Efforts should be made to assure uniformity in the wearing of the band at an area or a specific event.

3.3 Fee Collection Officer Designations and Revocations

Once trained, all employees or volunteers with fee collection responsibilities are designated as Fee Collection Officers. The approving official for the designation is the Fee Program Manager after review by the first line Fee Supervisor.

Fee Collectors should not be asked to sign a Designation of Fee Collection Officer form until they have been trained in all aspects of fee collection and the responsibilities of the position.

Upon signing the Form 10-585, the Designation and Revocation of Fee Collection Officer (See Appendix), the fee collector must have a thorough understanding of the following:

- a. RM-22 (Reference manual 22: Recreation Fee Guideline)
- b. the park specific fee operations manual
- c. processing remits
- d. safekeeping and accountability of all accountable stock
- e. use of all fee operation equipment and facilities
- f. an ongoing demonstration of adequacy in good customer service
- g. an all around sense of having sufficient knowledge and skill to perform their duties
- h. having worked in visitor centers and fee entrance stations

IV. Entrance Station Operations

For each specific operation, this guideline will include a brief statement of duties. Then a Standard Operations Procedure (SOP) will be included in the Appendix for each operation. The SOP will have detailed and specific direction for what to do in the various circumstances that may arise. The most up to date copy of Reference Manual-22 (RM-22) will also be available in each kiosk or visitor center.

SOP# 09-01 – North and West Entrance Station Operations

4.1 Customer Service

One of the most important duties of a Visitor Use Assistant is good customer service. To the visitor, you are the guardian of all that the National Park Service stands for. You will very often be the only park ranger the visitor will have contact with, and their experience will often depend on the manner and the substance of your interaction with them.

If a visitor comes for the first time to Joshua Tree National Park and is greeted by someone who is in a bad mood, or just feels too tired to reach out to serve that visitor properly, they will very likely carry that disappointment with them throughout the park and back to their respective homes. That will become a predominant part of their memory of Joshua Tree National Park.

The way to catch a visitor's interest and to help them to have a very good remembrance of their visit is to first of all greet them with a genuine smile and a welcome that you would most want to receive if you were visiting a National Park for the first time. Be sure to make good eye contact and let them know that this is their moment and you're there for them.

As you collect their fee, you may want to ask if they are traveling to other parks or federally managed lands. If so, you will be able to save them money and offer them convenience in most cases by offering them the interagency pass. So, with that smile and friendly greeting, you can collect their fee, issue their pass or 7-day receipt, give them a map brochure and newspaper and possibly answer a question or two. Try to determine something about them, by which you might be able to go an extra step in preparing them for their visit in the park. If they look or talk like hikers, be sure to help them understand about having plenty of water and keeping hydrated. Possibly you will be able to suggest a hike they wouldn't want to miss.

Then you may notice things such as a dog in the vehicle or a bicycle or an ORV (Off Road Vehicle) with which you would be able to give them directions such as dogs must be on a leash at all times, and are not allowed more than 100 feet from a legally open road, parking area or campground. Or you may want to point out to them that ORVs must remain on their trailers and are not allowed on park roads. A little extra interaction when you have this brief encounter with a new visitor can make the difference in a visit that is "acceptable" or one that becomes "a lifetime remembrance".

Sometimes you will have a difficult situation arise. This is also a part of providing good customer service. When dealing with someone who is unsatisfied, you may have the tendency to feel that their complaint is personal toward you. Try to remember that they are reporting their feelings or experience to you because you represent to them someone of authority who can help to sort things out.

Above all, be a good listener. Let them see that you care about them and their dilemma, and that you want to see it resolved. You may quickly discover that it will require more extensive work or a higher level of authority or expertise to bring resolution. If so, you can

kindly tell them that you will need to call your supervisor, the fee manager, or a law enforcement ranger to help them.

If the need is to correct a mistake or to deal with a problem beyond your means, you may need to refer the visitor to your supervisor. If you are confronted with a situation in which you feel is escalating beyond your control or to a level of uncertainty, your next step may be to call a law enforcement ranger. The safety of yourself and the visitor is of most importance and your actions in the moment must be determined by all aspects of the situation at hand. Whenever it is possible for you to bring resolution to the visitor's need, you should do so, but know your limitations.

4.2 Fees and Payments

Safeguarding and accounting of recreation fees charged for entrance to an area of the National Park System is one of a Fee Collection Officer's most important duties. The following describes acceptable means of payment for the purchase of single visit entrance fees, Park Specific annual pass, Interagency passes and recreation use fees:

a. Check acceptance policy and bad debt collection procedures

1. U.S. Currency

U.S. Currency and coin is the only form of cash payment accepted, at Joshua Tree National Park. Foreign currency and coin should not be accepted for any form of entrance fees.

2. Credit Cards

The NPS accepts MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express, and Diners Club credit and debit cards. When a visitor presents a credit card, the fee collector should check to see that the card is signed and then ask the visitor to sign the sales slip. If a signature is not obtained and the charge is disputed, the dispute will be upheld by the bank processor.

Compare signatures on the card and the sales slip to determine that they reasonably match. If there is a photo on the card, this extra identification can be considered. Under the *Visa Rules for Merchants*, parks should NOT ask for cardholder identification unless there is no signature on the card's back panel. The fee collector may refuse to accept an unsigned card. For complete guidance on accepting credit card payments, see Chapter 12 of RM-22.

3. Travelers Checks, Money Orders, Cashier's Checks and Gift Checks

Travelers Checks, Money Orders, Cashier's Checks and Gift Checks (similar to a Traveler's check) may be accepted under the following conditions:

- Travelers checks may be accepted when payment is in U.S. funds only. To honor travelers checks, the checks must be endorsed with the same signature as provided

when the checks were purchased. Do not accept the check if the second signature does not clearly match the original signature.

- Money orders must have a serial number and must be for the amount of purchase only.
- Cashier's checks must have the check number and must be for the amount of purchase only.

All checks are to be made payable to *National Park Service*.

4. Personal Checks

In general, personal checks from individuals will be accepted. When accepting a check, adequate identification such as a driver's license or passport should be requested for verification. At minimum, in case of having to pursue collection on a bad check, it must include the holder's current address and telephone number on the check. Exceptions are payments received in pipe safes or iron rangers.

If a check meets the minimum dollar threshold of \$25 or more, a Social Security Number (SSN) or a Tax Identification Number (TIN) must be recorded on the check.

The Privacy Act of 1974 requires Federal agencies that collect SSNs from individuals to inform them about the authority for collecting the SSNs and the uses that will be made of them. The following Disclosure Statement must be available when a SSN is requested:

"In accordance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (DCIA) 31 USC 7701;P.L. 104-134, section 31001, parks are required to obtain a Tax Identification Number (TIN) or Social Security Number (SSN) on checks. Such information will be used by the NPS solely for purposes of collecting and reporting on any delinquent amounts arising out of such person's relationship with the Government. If you decline to provide your TIN or SSN you must then provide a different form of payment."

5. Business Checks

Business checks may be accepted under the following conditions:

- The check is in U.S. funds only, payable to *National Park Service*.
- The check is written for the exact amount of sale.
- The check must show the following: amount of payment, name of the drawer, bank on which the check is drawn, date the check is drawn, check number, checking account symbol and serial number (if check is drawn on the Treasury).
- A Tax Identification Number (TIN) must be provided.
- The check has an authorizing signature.

If a business does not wish to provide a TIN, they must pay by means other than a personal or business check.

b. Unacceptable Forms of Payment

The following forms of payment are unacceptable:

- Foreign currency or checks
- Two-party checks (either a check requiring two signatures or a third-party check).
- Barter (of goods or services in lieu of money).
- Other private forms of tender such as tokens, notes, or chips.

c. Posting fee information and rates

Fee rates are posted just prior to entrance stations where entrance fees are collected. The rate board gives a breakdown of the different types of fees and the costs to purchase each one. The following is the cost at the time of this manual's authorization. These costs are subject to change:

7-Day Individual Single Entry Permit:	\$5.00
7-Day Vehicle Permit:	\$15.00
Joshua Tree National Park Annual Pass:	\$30.00
Interagency Annual Pass:	\$80.00
Interagency Senior Pass:	\$10.00
Interagency Access Pass:	FREE

One additional pass that can be obtained is the Interagency Volunteer Pass that can be earned through 500 hours of volunteer service in any Federal Lands agency.

d. Inability to pay

An inability to pay form (park generated) may be used for visitors who are exiting the park and do not have means to pay the entrance fee. The form is completed in duplicate, of which the original goes to the Fee office and the carbon copy goes to the visitor. The visitor will have 30 days to send payment by money order, cashier's check, or personal check.

The form will request the following from the visitor who cannot pay:
(See Appendix) **SOP# 09 - 02**

Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
Date of Birth: _____
Driver's License No. and State: _____

Signature of Visitor _____
Signature of Ranger _____

If a visitor is not willing to give complete information and show identification, call a Law Enforcement Ranger and report it. If the visitor leaves, take down the license plate number, State, and the best description of the vehicle you can give. At that time, notify a ranger that the visitor left the gate without paying and make any notes necessary to remind you of a description of the visitor and of the vehicle.

4.3 Precise and Correct Record Keeping

Record keeping is a necessary part of any Fee Collection Officer's duties. Without correct and precise records to verify your operations in the fee station, there are no checks and balances for the United States Government to support your transactions. Keeping records applies to the accounting of your originating bank and stock at the beginning of your shift as well as all transactions performed throughout your shift, which will show on your daily shift report at the end of your work day.

Your shift report and accompanying documents, receipts, voids, checks, currency and passes will reflect your performance and expertise. Precision in all documentation and cash register operations is of utmost importance to success in your position. Irresponsible record keeping could lead to legal ramifications if it is found that you were operating in a manner considered inappropriate to your position description and standard operating procedures, or was found to be using United States Government money for personal consideration.

V. Visitor Center Operations

The park has four visitor centers including the one owned by the Joshua Tree National Park Association on Park Boulevard in the town of Joshua Tree. There are certain characteristics of each one that should be noted.

The Joshua Tree Visitor Center is most always the one with the highest visitation. The Cottonwood visitor center will most often get the second highest visitation, then the Oasis visitor center being in third place and Black Rock being last.

Cottonwood is the only one with limitations on methods of payment since it is not able to take real time credit card payments. Rather than doing manual transactions and not being able to know if the card is good for a week or more, visitors who can only pay with credit cards should be directed to go to the nearest entrance station in their travel through the park to pay their entrance fee. If possible, try to get payment from the visitor in some way other than a credit card since the entrance stations may be closed when they exit.

Two of the visitor centers are associated with campgrounds and both Cottonwood and Black Rock have dump stations available for park visitors only at \$5.00 per action, per vehicle.

For detailed operating procedures for the four visitor centers, see the SOPs (Standard Operational Procedures) in the Appendix. **SOP # 3 - Joshua Tree and Oasis VCs, SOP # 4 - Cottonwood VC, and SOP # 5 - Black Rock VC**

VI. Campground Operations

6.1 Reservations

Currently NRRS (National Recreation Reservation Service) is contracted to provide reservation services for the park. There are three types of reservation campgrounds: (1) family, (2) group, and (3) equestrian. Family sites in Black Rock Campground and Indian Cove Campground can be reserved up to 6 months in advance of their arrival date. Family sites allow up to a maximum of six people, three tents, and two vehicles. Trailers and truck are counted as one vehicle. There are no showers or hook-ups at any of the campgrounds. Generator hours are 7-9am, noon-2pm, and 5-7pm. Quiet hours are from 10pm-6am.

The camping fee is \$15 per night per site at Black Rock and Indian Cove; and also at Cottonwood family sites, which is not on the reservation system. Campers with senior or access passes receive 50% off the camping fee.

Reservations for family and equestrian campsites can be made between 48 hours and six months of arrival date from September through the Memorial Day weekend by calling 1-877-444-6777, or you may make reservations online at www.recreation.gov. Group sites can be reserved year round but no less than 48 hours in advance of arrival date. In order for senior or access pass holders to receive the discount they will need to have their pass while making the reservation. They should also have their pass to show to rangers when checking in as well.

Reservations should be cancelled by the camper at least 24 hours in advance of the arrival date through NRRS via the phone number 877-444-6777 or the web address.

6.2 Self registrations

If campgrounds have unreserved sites, campers may occupy sites on a first-come, first-served basis by contacting the on-duty ranger to check availability and pay for the site. If the camper has arrived after hours, only sites without tags should be taken.

The group sites at Sheep Pass can be paid for on a first-come, first-served basis to a ranger on duty at either the North or West entrance stations. That ranger should consult the Group Camping Report to determine whether or not a site is available and also call the ranger on duty at either Indian Cove or Black Rock to check the NRRS system online for additions or changes.

Group sites at Cottonwood can be filled in the same manner by contacting the visitor center ranger to check availability. North entrance can be contacted by radio to relay the

information to either Indian Cove or Black Rock and to confirm that there have been no new additions to the group report. All payments can be made by cash, check, or credit card except at Cottonwood which cannot accept credit cards.

6.3 Iron Rangers

The term "Iron Ranger" refers to self-pay stations, usually located in campgrounds. The iron rangers themselves are constructed of heavy metal and are used in place of a person collecting fees, which is where the term "iron ranger" originated. At Joshua Tree there are iron rangers in Hidden Valley, Ryan, Jumbo Rock, Belle, White Tank and Cottonwood campgrounds. There are also iron rangers at the RV Dump stations at Black Rock and Cottonwood, and at Keys Ranch. All of these iron rangers have an inner canister which is locked into an outer sleeve that is bolted to the ground. To collect the fees from these iron rangers the entire canister is pulled and brought to the remit office to be opened and emptied. At Black Rock and Indian Cove there are slots in the sides of the buildings, and the iron rangers are inside the buildings. At the iron rangers are self-pay envelopes which visitors complete and deposit in a slot.

6.4 Daily Collection operations

Collection operations in campgrounds is basically a matter of collecting the Iron Ranger canisters, bringing them back to the Remit office where a second person has an additional key necessary for opening them. In the campground, collection efforts are enhanced by the campground ranger walking through the sites, looking for pay stubs and contacting those who have not paid. Numerous reasons are given as to why the payment has not been made, and then after the ranger makes request for payment, it is usually done imminently. The ranger takes down information of the camper, a basic description, time of contact, vehicle description and license plate information. If the payment is not made, then the information is passed along to law enforcement for follow-up.

During the campground walk through, any violations of campground rules and regulations are noted and mentioned to the camper if the campground ranger is comfortable doing that. Otherwise they will report the information to law enforcement for their consideration as to what should be done.

During the walkthrough, there is information collected for determining if some campers may be exceeding the camping limit of 14 days during our season, or 30 days for the year. When discovered, this information also is reported to law enforcement.

VII. Park Fees and Passes

7.1 Types of fees

Entrance fees are paid in one of three forms, per vehicle, per person or group fees.

A *vehicle fee* is an entrance fee paid by a visitor for entry of a single, private, non-commercial vehicle and its passengers into an NPS unit.

A *per-person fee* is an entrance fee paid by an individual visitor for entry by means other than a single, private, non-commercial vehicle. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals who enter a NPS unit by walking, bicycling, horseback riding, or traveling with a transportation-only type service such as a taxi, limousine, or chartered bus.

At NPS units with both a vehicle and a per person fee, a family entering together by a mode other than a single, private, non-commercial vehicle would pay no more than the vehicle fee. At units with only a per person fee, each family member 16 years of age and over would pay the per person fee (15 and under are free).

A *group fee* is charged when individuals arriving as a group are charged under group fee guidelines, including those who arrive in vehicles chartered for transportation only. Refer to the section on groups for more information about how to charge.

At Joshua Tree National Park we charge groups by the Tier 3 Group Rate as follows:

Commercial Tour Fees: Based on a combination of passenger capacity of the vehicle and the number of people occupying the vehicle.

Passenger capacity	Tour fee
(Motorcycles 1 or 2)	
1 - 6	\$ 5.00 per person
7 - 15	\$ 25.00 plus \$5.00 per person
16 - 25	\$ 50.00
26 and over	\$ 60.00
	\$150.00

Non-commercial tours are charged the per-person rate unless the commercial rate is less. Example: If a bus of 26 or more capacity comes into the park, the commercial rate would be \$150.00. If a non-commercial group in a bus arrives and there are 40 people who would need to pay the per-person rate, amounting to a total of \$200.00, the commercial rate of \$150.00 would be charged instead.

7.2 Types of passes

1. Joshua Tree Annual
2. Interagency Annual
3. Interagency Senior
4. Interagency Access
5. Interagency Volunteer (for entrance but not for purchase)

a. Use of passes and verification of pass ownership

Passholder identification and verification is key to preventing and eliminating fraudulent use of the passes. All passes are nontransferable. To maintain the integrity of the pass system it is required that all pass holders present verifiable identification to show ownership of the pass being used. That can be in the form of a drivers license, passport or other legitimate identification.

7.3 Exceptions to the Non-Transferable Policy

In order to present ourselves and our policies as reasonable, we want to be sure that each visitor is given adequate opportunity to explain an out of the ordinary type of circumstance that might warrant our understanding. Policy for the use and benefits of passes states that passes may be used by the signor(s) only. However there are times when extenuating circumstances may be considered. For example, a pass holder's friend leaves the park to get groceries while the pass holder stays at the campground. Upon re-entry, the friend realizes that the pass is with its rightful owner in the campground. If you believe the story or remember them coming in previously, the reasonable thing to do might be to allow the friend to go in on that explanation. To stay with the policy of pass use, it would be completely within your right to require a payment, but in some circumstances it may be legitimate to provide this exception.

Another way to handle a similar type of circumstance might be to charge the friend who is re-entering and write some type of description of the vehicle on the back of the receipt with the understanding that when they exit and the pass holder can show identification along with a pass, the single entry purchase will be refunded to them. In all situations the NPS policy is of first priority.

7.4 Procedures on receiving and distributing inventory

Accountable property (passes) is ordered from USGS by the Fee Supervisor. When the passes are received at the park, the Fee Manager and another person, usually the Fee Supervisor, will count the passes to verify the shipment was complete and matches the packing list.

Both people will initial and date the packing list. The passes are then turned over to the Remit Clerk who will log them in on the appropriate sheet in the Accountable Stock Records notebook. The initialed packing list is kept in the front of the notebook. On the Accountable Stock Records sheet list the date received, the serial numbers, the total quantity received, and the total quantity on hand.

When issuing passes the Remit Clerk or Fee Supervisor will complete a **DI-105, Receipt for Property** (See Appendix) The form will show which location the inventory is being issued to, the serial numbers and type of passes issued, and the total number of each type of pass. The same information will be recorded in the Accountable Stock Records notebook, being sure to adjust the quantity on hand.

When the inventory is delivered to the station, the VUA will count all of the passes, then sign and date the Receipt for Property. The pink copy is retained at the station and original and blue copies are kept on file in the Remit Office.

7.5 Park specific and non-recreational passes

At Joshua Tree we have a park specific annual pass, meaning visitors can purchase a pass which allows them entrance into Joshua Tree National Park for 12 months. Due to the exceptional value it is good customer service to offer this pass to visitors, especially if you think they may be local or you have seen them visit the park more than once. Single entrance receipts can be upgraded to the annual pass, so if a visitor is exiting the park and mentions how much they enjoyed their visit that would also be a time to offer the annual pass.

"Non-recreational passes" allow individuals free entrance into the park for specific non-recreational purposes. These individuals include contractors, volunteers, researchers, and inholders (people who own property within the park boundary). A complete list of individuals that fit this category will be provided. In some cases these individuals will not have an actual pass.

VIII. Fee Waivers / Exemptions / Suspensions

8.1 Two types of exceptions to paying entrance fees

There are only two ways in which entrance to a Fee designated National Park is waived. They are either by "exemption" or "Suspension". Included in an exemption are academic fee waivers. Fee suspensions are normally used for emergencies, natural disasters, planned events, or anytime that it is not feasible to collect fees. Suspension of fees is a planned event, emergency or a designated fee free day designate as so by the NPS.

8.2 What is a Fee Waiver?

A fee waiver is a type of exemption used for outings that are conducted for non-commercial educational purposes. Commercial enterprises are not eligible for fee waivers.

a. Processing and approving educational fee waivers:

Educational groups at the college and university level must make application to the Fee Program Manager for an educational fee waiver on the Park generated "Entrance Fee Waiver for Educational Study" Application Form, (See Appendix) and meet the criteria for granting it. High school and below will make application through the education department at Black Rock. The three criteria for qualifying for an educational fee waiver are: eligibility, educational purpose, and relevance of park resources and facilities.

b. Eligibility: Academic institutions of the United States and international institutions that can prove eligibility with the following proper documentation may be given a waiver:

- A statement confirming educational or scientific tax exemption from the IRS or the applicant's national, state, or local tax authority, OR
- A statement from an academic institution meeting one of these three eligibility standards, confirming that the group's visit is for the purpose of providing transferable academic credit based on a curriculum, OR
- A statement of accreditation or recognition as an educational institution.

8.3 What is an Exemption of Fees?

An exemption of fees applies to those who lawfully enter or use a park for activities not related to recreation. The following is a list of activities which would normally exempt users from paying fees:

1. First Amendment Activities
2. Any non-recreational activity authorized under a valid permit such as agricultural, grazing, commercial filming or photography done for commercial advertising purposes.
3. NPS authorized collecting and research activities. The researchers should have a permit to show this authorization.
4. Any individual conducting official business for Federal, state, tribal, or local government.
5. Hospital in-patients involved in medical treatment or therapy
6. Leaseholders (commonly known as Inholders) or property owners accessing their property and their guests.
7. Outings conducted for non-commercial educational purposes by schools or other bona fide academic institutions. Verification that those entering are doing so legally under this exemption will have an Educational Fee Waiver in possession.
8. Any person 15 years of age or younger, including international visitors
9. Anyone entering an entrance fee park on a fee-free day
10. NPS employees, volunteers, or concession personnel when entering the park for non-recreational purposes such as working, attending training or orientation, or conducting official business.
11. Researchers, contractors, vendors, and utility, delivery or service people entering and working in the park for non-recreational purposes.
12. Members of American Indian tribes or traditionally associated groups entering a park for traditional, non-recreational activities.

8.4 What is a Suspension of Fees?

A suspension of fees may be enacted by the Superintendent in cases of emergency, natural disaster, planned event, or whenever it is not feasible to collect fees.

The following are examples of fee suspensions, which the NPS annually observes, known as fee-free days:

National Public Lands Day, which is typically celebrated the last Saturday in September and is an interagency fee-free day.

Veterans Day: this is authorized for U.S. veterans, members of the U.S. armed forces, and their families. Documentation is not required, and entrance personnel should not question a visitor's claim to a connection with the military or right to qualify for free entry.

Other Fee-Free Days may occur through Presidential or Departmental declaration. Unless otherwise directed, the fee entrance is ONE day regardless of the park's standard entrance permit period. A fee-free day does not automatically waive expanded amenity fees, but may at the Superintendent's discretion.

Commercial tour fees are normally waived also on fee-free days unless otherwise directed. Annual, seasonal and lifetime passes should be available for purchase during these fee-free days.

A zero-value receipt equivalent to a one-day pass may be issued to visitors entering on a fee-free day.

8.5 What is an inholder?

Inholders and their guests are to be allowed entrance without charge. If someone arrives who is a guest of an inholder and the guest's name has not been given to the entrance station personnel, a one-time free entrance should be given with a message to the inholder that anyone not listed at the fee station as an authorized guest will not be allowed free entrance.

An inholder may be a leaseholder or a property owner who occupies property within the boundaries of the NPS area.

8.6 When to waive fees on Media!

Media may consist of radio, newspaper, or television staff that is entering a national park area for a variety of different purposes. An incident occurring in the park that draws attention to the park by the general public will often be classified as "breaking news". Other media personnel may enter an NPS area to do a documentary or editorial for a news or magazine publication, radio or television station. Others may enter with a media card and try to claim exemption of fees on that basis.

Only news organizations entering the park to report on “breaking news” is allowed entrance without charge. One exception to that is those entering to film a documentary, which means they would have obtained a Special Use Permit for filming.

“Breaking News” is differentiated from editorials or documentaries because it is spontaneous, or urgent / timely coverage of *an emerging event that cannot be covered at any other time or location*, and is typically filmed for immediate release to the public.

8.7 Other exempt persons

1. park employees – The Superintendent has allowed for park employees and their families to be considered exempt from entrance fees due to their service to the park and the community.

2. park volunteers doing park business – Volunteers have been regarded much like park employees so that anyone holding a Joshua Tree National Park Volunteer identification may be allowed into the park without charge.

3. anyone visiting park employees inside the park – Anyone entering the park for the purpose of visiting a park employee has also been considered an exempt person for the purpose of entrance fees.

4. Tow or Taxi requested by visitor with pass or receipt – Tow or taxi companies have not been required to obtain Commercial Use Authorizations because they do a service for the public who visits the park and a service to the park in their aid to the public who have need of their services. As long as the visitor who is being assisted by one of these companies has a pass or has paid an entrance fee, these companies are not charged entrance fees. If the visitor has not paid or does not have a pass, the entrance fee would apply. It’s important to be discretionary in these incidents. Depending on the situation and the need, there may be times when you would simply instruct that the visitor pay on their way back into the park or when exiting with their vehicle or associates visiting with them.

5. Special Use Permittees doing business in the park

a. Film / Photography shoots – Film and photography companies are not in the park for the purpose of recreation and therefore are exempt from paying entrance fees. Those who might be coming into the park to observe the work of the film or photography company will be charged as any other visitor would be.

b. Military – Training under a permit, Traveling under orders, - Often there are military units who come to the park for training purposes. Military units are not arbitrarily given free entrance. If they are permitted through a special use permit for their training, they should have in their possession a copy of the permit. It is possible that each individual associated with this event may not have a copy of the permit. In those cases, ask for information as to the event and location so the information can be compared with the Special Park Use office for confirmation.

8.8 Non-Exempt Persons:

1. Special Use Permittees doing recreational or scenic type events (weddings), (reunions), etc. -

If someone enters the park with a special use permit that directs them to a location approved for a wedding, that permit no longer qualifies them to enter without paying entrance fees. Since their activity is being done in that location for the scenic values of the location and the personal benefit the park gives for the occasion, the activity is considered a recreational, type of activity. Many of our visitors come to the park, not for hiking, camping, rock climbing, etc. but for a drive-through to enjoy the scenery.

Family reunions are another way in which large groups of people may come to enjoy the park. Even though they may have a permit, their visit is not a fee-exempt activity, and should be charged just like any other visitors.

IX. Fee Related Law Enforcement Issues

9.1 Robbery response

1. Give suspect what he demands, no questions asked, then Press the Panic Alarm button
2. Once suspect is gone, close security screen and contact Dispatch
3. Provide description of:
 - **suspects:** number, color, hair, glasses, etc
 - **vehicle:** color, make, model, style (plate may be too hard to get without exposing yourself)
4. Wait for Ranger or Sheriff's Officer to respond
5. Go home (*or to your supervisor's office*) and take care of yourself

9.2 Open containers

1. Contact Ranger via Dispatch
 2. Provide description of vehicle
 3. Provide description of suspects inside vehicle
 4. Provide description of alcohol and location
 5. Provide direction of travel or destination of suspects, if known
- ***DO NOT COMMENT TO VISITOR ABOUT THE ALCOHOL*****

9.3 Weapons

1. Contact Ranger via Dispatch
 2. Provide description of vehicle
 3. Provide description of suspects inside vehicle
 4. Provide description of weapon (handgun, long gun, etc) and location
 5. Provide direction of travel and/or destination of suspects, if known
- ***DO NOT COMMENT TO VISITOR ABOUT THE WEAPONS*****

9.4. Suspicious Visitor Contact

A suspicious visitor contact may cause suspicion by something said or some manner in which the visitor acts toward you, or the type of questions asked. If a visitor asks consecutive questions or statements such as "What time do you close the stations?" or "You must take in a lot of money in a day's time!" or "Do you have alarms in the event of an emergency?" or "Do you have a telephone?", you may be dealing with someone who is scouting for a robbery attempt.

Questions such as these and similar should alert the suspicious part of you to the possibility that you may be the next target. If you feel something, don't just throw it off and say to yourself that you're being too sensitive. Take notes and talk with your supervisor, your fee program manager or any law enforcement ranger right away.

Document the complete encounter and keep notes on what the person looked like, any distinguishing marks such as tattoos or scars or anything that stands out about the person, the time and date of this encounter, the day of the week, any vehicle description, license plate, or any part of the encounter that stands out in your mind. If this person has come around before, make a note, and if he/she comes back after a suspicious contact, be sure to add to your notes the time, date, day of the week, the content of the conversation, any further description, etc and notify law enforcement as well as your supervisor.

9.5 Suspected Pass fraud

An Interagency Pass is to be used by the signor(s) only. If a pass is presented and it is determined by the pass holder's identification that it is not the same person, you would mark across the signature portion of the pass with a RED indelible marker and explain to the pass holder that only the signor(s) are authorized to use the pass. Also explain that a second RED mark will void the pass. If you are presented a pass by someone other than the pass holder(s) that already has one RED mark, then mark the pass a second time and explain to the presenter that the pass is now void.

If you believe that this should be reported to a law enforcement Ranger, make a note of the description of the pass holder, the type and color of the vehicle, license plate, and direction of travel and/or destination of pass holder, if known. If there is reason to believe that the pass holder needs to be contacted by law enforcement right away, do the following:

1. Hold Pass and inform visitor a Ranger will be meeting with them shortly
2. Ask visitor to pull over to the side of the road
3. Immediately contact a Ranger via Dispatch and inform of the suspected pass fraud

****If visitor does not want to pull over do not argue with them. Let them go and report vehicle and suspect description, direction of travel and/or destination.**

9.6 SAR or Search and Rescue Related events, Injuries, Accidents

1. Contact Rangers via Dispatch after receiving location and nature of incident
2. Ask reporting party for name, address, date of birth, and phone number

3. Complete the Accident-Injury-Missing Persons-Law Enforcement Incident Reporting Form
4. Ask reporting party if they can wait for a Ranger to arrive in order for them to provide Ranger with first person information (if they cannot, at least you have the contact information)
5. When Ranger arrives, provide Ranger with the Incident Reporting form.

X. Cash Register Operations

10.1 How to use the Datasym

The Datasym cash registers are used for cash and credit card sales, and for keeping track of re-entry statistics. There is a cash register at each entrance station, visitor center, and campground ranger station. Due to the high volume of traffic at the West Entrance that location has 2 cash registers. At the Oasis and Joshua Tree visitor centers the statistics keys are replaced by keys to sell Keys Ranch tickets. Because there are no phone lines at Cottonwood, that cash register is not set up to process credit card transactions. Each employee using the cash registers has his or her own login ID. All sales completed by each person are tracked, and each person's first initial and the first four letters of their last name print on the sales receipts issued during their shift. For accountability purposes only one person is authorized to use the cash register at a time - "Sharing" the cash drawer is prohibited. There is a separate procedure for covering lunch breaks.

See SOP for Datasym cash register procedures – 09-06

10.2 Maintenance

In maintaining the cash registers it is extremely important to pull the receipts off sideways, taking advantage of the perforation. Pulling straight up and too hard causes undo wear on the cash register printer, and results in the printer jamming and having to be replaced.

Canned air may be used periodically if paper dust is present.

The credit card swipe should be cleaned using the special cleaning card provided.

10.3 Policies on Voids, Upgrades, and Refunds

Voids.

We do not use the "void" key on the cash register. Using this key removes the transaction completely. By using the "refund/credit" key we have a record of the transaction and the correction if an error was made.

Upgrades.

A visitor may upgrade a Joshua Tree individual or single vehicle receipt to a Joshua Tree Annual Pass, and Interagency Senior Pass or an Interagency Annual Pass. Two individual receipts may be applied toward one annual pass, but only one single vehicle receipt may be used. The receipt must be valid; however, we will accept a receipt on the 8th day if a visitor is upgrading to a Joshua Tree Annual Pass, i.e. the visitor purchases the original receipt on Saturday and returns the following Saturday and wants to upgrade to the annual pass.

A visitor may also upgrade single vehicle receipts from other parks to an Interagency Annual Pass. Receipts may be accepted for 14 days from time of purchase or for the duration of the visitor's travel itinerary. Only one single vehicle receipt may be accepted from each park, or two individual receipts where a per-person fee is charged. If the visitor presents receipts totaling more than the price of the pass, no change may be given.

For all upgrades the receipts must be stamped "void" and attached to the Register of Void and Refund Transactions form, (See Appendix) commonly referred to as the "Void Sheet." A description of the transaction must include the serial number of the new pass.

If a visitor has purchased a single vehicle receipt and is eligible for an Interagency Senior Pass, change may be given with the pass.

Refunds:

There are very few circumstances when a visitor should be given his or her money back. If a visitor entering the park has forgotten his or her pass, tell the visitor that payment will be required for entry, but if the visitor can return to the park within the 7 days with a valid entrance pass, we will refund their entrance fee. A copied picture of the pass will not be acceptable. The visitor must return with the pass and acceptable identification.

Another situation could occur if a visitor purchases a 7-day receipt and learns he or she is eligible for the \$10 Senior or Free Access Pass. In this case the correct pass would be issued and the visitor would be refunded the difference. At times there is confusion over which pass the visitor wishes to purchase, especially if there are language issues with foreign tourists. If the fee collector sells a pass that the visitor did not intend to purchase, the pass may be refunded and the correct pass then sold. As always, when in doubt, contact the Fee Supervisor or Fee Program Manager for guidance.

10.4 Safety – too much cash in register, when to deposit!

Checks and large bills should be kept under the small tray in the cash register, if there is one. When there is a bundle of 25 \$20 bills and/or several large bills, this cash should be removed from the register and put in the safe. If traffic does not allow the time to put the cash in the safe, put it under the small tray in the cash register so it is not visible to the visitors.

10.5 Use of Safe logs

New safe logs will be used to document every time the safe is opened and for what purpose. This includes retrieving the change fund and accountable property at the beginning of the shift, putting cash in the safe during the shift, and making the deposit at the end of the shift. The log has columns for the time the safe was opened, why the safe was opened, and who opened the safe. See SOP 09-07

10.6 Change of Cashier

Never is it permissible for two people to operate out of the same cash drawer. All monies collected into a cash drawer on any given day belongs to the United States Government and must be safeguarded at every turn. Serious consequences can occur to anyone who willfully or without concern mishandles funds belonging to the Federal Government. For this reason, a Change of Cashier Procedures has been drawn up so that one person only will be considered responsible for the handling of funds in a cash drawer. For a complete guide on how to properly transfer responsibility to a co-worker when going to lunch, leaving a shift or for any reason leaving the cash drawer, **See SOP 09-08, the Change of Cashier Procedures.**

XI. Other Fee Related Equipment and their use

11.1 Copiers

We live in an electronic age. Most of the equipment that we use in our daily lives has electronic capabilities in one way or another. Copying machines are an extremely useful tool which is used in almost every work environment that can be found throughout the country.

When using copy machines, be sure that you understand the functions of the machine. You may have used many copiers before, but with the continual increase in functions available, there are times when instruction is necessary so that your use of the machine does not reprogram it in ways undesirable for the next user. Ask for help if it seems to be something other than what you are accustomed to. As with all U.S. Government property, it is to be used for U.S. Government business, not for personal use.

11.2 Park radios

Park radios are to be used for U.S. Government business only. When communication must be made through the park radio system, know who you are going to call, what you need to say and try not to lengthen the transmission of communication anymore than is necessary.

When using the radio system, it is important to understand that when you press the "Talk" button, you must wait about 3 seconds to be sure that the session is engaged. Once you have waited for the time needed for engagement, begin with the call number of the person you are calling. If you're calling the Interagency dispatch, you would begin your transmission with "San Bernardino"then announce your call number or station. Once the other party has

responded, proceed with your message. Example: You are calling in service at the West entrance station. Your transmission over the park radio would go something like this: "San Bernardino.....West entrance in service". Wait then to hear San Bernardino respond. They will say something like: "West entrance in service 7:45". If you are operating a station and someone comes to you with report of an emergency, you would immediately upon receiving the reporting party's information say "San Bernardino...(West Entrance)...Emergency Traffic". Then proceed with the information you need to communicate. (West Entrance) in this case is an example. The entrance station or Visitor Center you are working will be the station you are reporting from.

For complete radio operations guide see SOP 09-09

11.3 Telephones

We live in a time when almost everyone seems to have a cell phone in their pocket. When on duty in a fee station or visitor center, it is important that your cell phone is off or on vibrate. When you are having contact with a visitor, its very important that the visitor has your complete attention unless something of an emergency is taking you from them. When working in government offices and facilities, phone use should primarily be limited to work related phone calls. Personal calls need to be kept to a minimum and should not interfere with work tasks. When a visitor is at your entrance station, ranger station or visitor center ask the person on the phone to hold (even with a park employee) and give the visitor your full attention.

11.4 Alarms

Alarms in federal buildings are put into place to ensure security and safety of the building, the employees that work there, and the money, passes and supplies inside. Each staff member must know how the system operates, the codes to arm or disarm, and what to do in the event of triggering an unintentional alarm. The first step to take would be to call FICC, the Federal Interagency Communications Center, the interagency dispatcher center. You can reach them by park radio or call them at (909) 383-5652, the non-emergency phone number. Explain the cause of the alarm system going off and they will contact Pacific Alarm or Rangers as needed.

11.5 Computers

Primarily, all Government equipment is designated for government work and is to be used for those purposes only. However, as responsible employees of the Federal Government, it has been recognized that you are the key to making government more responsive to its citizens. The Executive Branch of the Federal Government has authorized its employees to use government office equipment for non-government purposes when such use involves minimal additional expense to the government, is performed on the employee's non-work time, does not interfere with the mission or operations of a department or agency and does not violate the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch.

The following checklist will give good guidance on how to use government computers and the internet for personal use in a way that does not violate the standards of your position:

- 1 Use on personal time only
- 2 Check personal e-mail in agency approved e-mail provider
- 3 Visiting informational web sites for increased learning.
- 4 DO NOT visit questionable web sites (i.e., gambling, chat rooms, of sexual nature)
- 5 DO NOT download messenger programs

Care must be taken to avoid abuse of the privilege that is given to use the government's computers and internet. By observing the following, you will keep yourself safe from any abuse or appearance of abuse:

- 1 Limit use of government computers for personal reasons.
- 2 Limit visits to websites that are not related to your job, career, or continuing education.
- 3 Avoid websites that are inappropriate, or which may be adversarial to the mission of the bureau.
- 4 Using emails to represent the agency in any manner not appropriate with one's position and for which one has not received proper clearance is prohibited.
- 5 Generally, do not transfer, maintain or store work material on a home *personal* computer. This may cause problems when answering or processing FOIA and Privacy Act requests for such information.

11.6 Printers

Printers and fax machines can be abused as any other government equipment but with thought and consideration of its use, these can also be used in a limited way for personal use. Thinking of government equipment as being off-limits in a general sense can help us to use them in a more responsible manner and on those occasions when it is necessary to make a limited use for personal reasons, we will tend to do it in an acceptable way

11.7 Park Vehicles

Government vehicles are to be parked overnight at the employee's official duty station, unless the employee is in official travel status, or has received specific approval for temporary storage from the Superintendent or designee.

While in official travel status, employees may use a government vehicle for official purposes, which include transportation:

- a) Between places of official business
- b) Between places of official business and temporary lodging when public transportation is unavailable or its use is impractical, or
- c) Between places of official business or temporary lodging and restaurants, drugstores, barber shops, places of worship, cleaning establishments, and similar places

necessary for sustenance, comfort, or health of the employee to foster the continued efficient performance of Government business.

Employees shall exercise discretion to avoid, whenever possible, any situation which may tend to convey an impression to the public that the Government vehicle is being used for anything other than official purposes.

Personal use of a Government vehicle is strictly prohibited. Under GSA.gov, Federal Management Regulations, Subpart D, §102-34.220 and 225, unofficial use of a Government vehicle will be reported to the head of the agency, disciplinary action under 31 U.S.C. 1349 may be taken and the abuse may be reported to the Attorney General for prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 641.

“If an employee willfully uses, or authorizes the use of a Government motor vehicle for other than official purposes, the employee is subject to suspension of at least one month or, up to and including, removal by the head of the agency (31 U.S.C. 1349).”

Ref. <http://www.gsa.gov/federalmanagementregulation>

11.8 Executive Branch Model for Personal Use of Government Office Equipment

The Executive Branch of the Federal Government has established privileges and responsibilities that recognize their employees as responsible individuals who are the key to making government more responsive to its citizens. This recognition allows employees to use government office equipment for non-government purposes when such use involves minimal additional expense to the government, is performed on the employee's non-work time, does not interfere with the mission or operations of a department or agency and does not violate the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch. It is believed that allowing limited personal use of these tools helps enhance the quality of the workplace and helps the Government to retain highly qualified and skilled workers.

Ref: Recommended Executive Branch Model Policy/Guidance on “Limited Personal Use” of Government office equipment, including Information Technology

Approved Personal Use of Government Equipment Guide:

- Use on personal time only
- Check personal e-mail in agency approved e-mail provider
- Visiting informational Web sites
- DO NOT visit questionable Web sites (i.e., gambling, chat rooms, of sexual nature)
- DO NOT download messenger programs

Computers/Internet

In limiting use of government computers for personal reasons, the following will guide you safely:

- Limit visits to websites that are not related to your job, career, or continuing education.

- Avoid websites that are inappropriate, or which may be adversarial to the mission of the bureau.
- Do not use email to represent the agency in any manner not appropriate with one's position and for which one has not received proper clearance.
- Generally, do not transfer, maintain or store work material on a home *personal* computer. This may cause problems when answering or processing FOIA and Privacy Act requests for such information.

Telephone –

Some of life's necessities have to be taken care of when other people or businesses are available, such as doctor's appointments, legal, veterinarian, lending institutions, etc. These types of calls must be made in many occasions during the hours you are at work. When needing to make calls of this type, try to find a time of day when it will effect your work schedule the least, and make brief local calls. If you're calling long distance calls, please use 800 numbers or a personal phone card, so a personal call does not incur charges to the Government.

Copiers/Printers/Fax Machine –

Same direction as for phones as applicable. Receiving faxes does not incur a long distance charge. If an incoming fax will create the need for more than just a few pages, be prepared to supply your own paper. The same is so for copiers and printers. Only minimal use is approved by the Executive Branch Model.

XII. Personnel Issues

12.1. Daily operations

The daily operations for Fee Collection personnel will vary dependent on the duty station assigned and the type of visitation day experienced. Some days will be very casual due to a small number of visitors encountered, while other days will seem breathless because of the unending and continuous approach of one visitor after another. During these high pressure days, it is always important that the Fee Collection Officer recognizes his or her own capabilities, strengths and weaknesses. If safety, physical or emotional need requires it, you should simply waive the visitors through and ask them to pay on the way out. Your personal safety and well being is of priority importance. Each member of the staff has capabilities peculiar to their own abilities and strengths. If things seem to be overwhelming your ability to cope, call your supervisor and do what is necessary, even if that means closing the entrance station.

At the end of the day, each staff member needs to know that from their own abilities, skills and talents they have applied their efforts in a satisfactory manner, not only for the NPS, but for themselves. This will normally help an employee to feel better about their job performance and their usefulness to the position for which they are employed.

12.2. Absence and Leave Policies

Assigned duties implies that one who is assigned them carries with that assignment a responsibility to be on the job and to be responsible to carry out that assignment. There are numerous, valid reasons why someone may not be able to carry out an expected responsibility previously assigned. In those times, it is important to notify your supervisor immediately upon recognition that the responsibilities assigned to you cannot be performed with valid reasons of why its not possible to do them.

Leave categories are normally categorized under the following 5 types:

1. Annual Leave
2. Compensatory leave
3. Sick leave
4. Administrative leave
5. Leave without pay

1. *Annual leave* should be prepared for and planned, so that there is time to request and be approved for it before the time to use it. Your supervisor will need some length of time to evaluate the schedule and the work load in order to be able to say that the leave can be approved.

2. *Compensatory leave* is much the same, but is derived differently. Whereas annual leave is accrued by so many hours per pay period, compensatory leave is basically an exchange. Someone works outside of their predetermined schedule usually in exchange for overtime pay, or compensatory time off. Many times a work detail may cause the employee to have to work beyond their normal schedule. This will be paid as overtime pay unless the employee requests that they receive compensatory time off instead.

3. *Sick leave* is often needed in a moment of time unexpected, either because of an injury or an illness that you are not prepared for. This leave type is the kind that is often misused more than others. Its easy for an employee to be irresponsible in their off duty time to such an extent that they end up not able to function properly when their next shift rolls around. This often results in last minute sick leave requests of the supervisor, which puts everyone on staff into a precarious situation. Not only is the excused employee affected, but the supervisor and the possibility of numerous staff members can also be affected with last minute schedule changes. Many times those schedule changes means that an employee on a lieu day is asked if they will cancel all their plans and come in for hire at the expense of family and friends who were counting on them for a day off and corporate activities which now must be cancelled or postponed.

Abuse of sick leave privileges at times will become a performance issue with employees whose irresponsibility causes them to ask more and more for this unexpected time off. It can result in negative points against the employee's evaluation, restricted sick leave and eventually dismissal if not properly handled by the employee and supervisor.

In making mention of the abuse of sick leave, it is not implied that all or most of sick leave is abuse. Just the opposite is true. There are many times that sick leave is required and for very legitimate reasons. It is important that in those times the sick employee does what is necessary and stays home. Once the employee returns to work, it must be considered a priority that an OPM Form 71, Request for Leave or Approved Absence (See Appendix) is completed and submitted to your supervisor.

4. *Administrative leave* is granted by the Superintendent for reasons normally unrelated to the employees' plans. The most common would be in situations when something happens that makes it unsafe for the employee to remain at work. A good example is an unexpected weather condition that proposes to make a trip home after the employee's shift an unsafe condition. The Superintendent may at his/her discretion give time off from the regular shift for the employee to leave early in order to get home safely.

Often times, during holiday seasons, the President may choose to give extra time off to federal employees due to a season of good performance to the government. Christmas Eve and the Eve of Thanksgiving Day is often given a few hours early off because employees many times have family get-togethers that may require travel or preparations. When this leave is passed down from the President, it is usually passed along to the entire unessential workforce. Those who can be excused from their work stations are excused and those who must continue to perform their duties, are normally given that time off at another time.

5. *Leave without pay* is usually given in unusual circumstances when an employee has a serious need of time off but has exhausted their annual leave and sick leave. An example might be when someone has just gone through a time of crisis and has used all their accrued leave, and then finds themselves in a situation when necessity requires their attention to be off. At times like this, the Superintendent has the discretion of giving time off known as leave without pay. The employee gets permission to take time off but that time away is not compensated for.

12.3. What to do when injured at work

When an injury occurs at work, the first priority is to get any medical help or assistance of any kind that is needed. As quickly as possible, contact your supervisor, the fee manager or another employee. Above all, get the help that is needed and as much as possible secure any accountable property or funds. When you are able to do so, get help in preparing forms and supplying information to the Human Resources department. Workman's Compensation will need information, and your supervisor will need to know how to revise the work schedule based upon the information you receive from your healthcare provider.

12.4. Overtime

Overtime is work performed in addition to that which you have been previously scheduled. Overtime is most often voluntary; however there are times due to the need of the organization that overtime may be considered mandatory. When asked to work overtime, the payment default method will be time and a half payment. If the employee should ask for

Compensatory Time instead, it most often will be granted. Overtime or Compensatory Time earned or taken will be requested through the Joshua Tree "Request for Pay Differential" form. See Appendix!

12.5. Personnel Files

Personnel files are kept on each employee through the Human Resources office. This file is the record of all training, assignments, positions held, EOD dates, discharge dates, pay raises, etc. It is important that each employee is careful to submit records of training as received, if it is done outside of your regular duties. In some cases, that record of training may be an essential part of your file for the purpose of promotions, qualification for promotion, and retirement.

12.6. EEO – Equal Employment Opportunities

The United States Government, Department of Interior, and the National Park Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer. New hires into the agency are selected through the merits of their abilities, not by personal favoritism. Everyone has equal rights to the recruitment opportunities announced by the agency if their training, education and experience qualify them to do the job being recruited for. These are the basis for selection. In essence it is not who you know but what you know and what your experience qualifies you to perform.

12.7. EAP – Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program is set up for the aid and encouragement of employees to have counsel and consideration in times of need. You may have lost a loved one, or a pet or find yourself in a conflicting time of life when things don't make sense as they did in the past. In times like this you can find help through the EAP. Just call 1-800-222-0364 for free consultation on any need related to the following:

Some examples of services provided are:

- Emotional
- Relationship
- Family
- Alcohol
- Financial
- Job concerns

There is also an EAP Legal Service available to help with things such as

- Healthcare Power of Attorney
- Living Wills
- Housing or Real Estate Matters
- Estate Planning
- Family law, divorce, child custody, child support
- Car accidents and related matters
- Identity theft

Consumer concerns
Criminal matters
Small claims court issues
Traffic Violations

Assistance for all the above needs can be found through a phone call to 1-800-222-0364. The consultation is offered at no charge. If additional services from an attorney beyond the initial free consultation are needed, the continued services will be offered at discounted rates.

12.8. Conflict Resolution

a. With Visitors – When you experience a visitor created conflict, your first and most important perspective should be that YOU are not the conflict. Remember this, so that you don't take personally the complaint that is being presented to you. You are being addressed with this complaint because you represent the NPS under whose jurisdiction the conflict has been produced. They are presenting the complaint to you because they see you as someone with authority who may have a solution for the conflict. This should be taken as a compliment.

Many times, with clear thinking, you will be able to present an amiable solution to the problem; however it must be solved according to the law and NPS policies. It's important to understand your limits and to know when you've reached the limit of possible solutions. At this point if the proposed solution is not providing the relief sought by the visitor, you can refer them to a law enforcement ranger, your first line supervisor or the Fee program manager. At this point, dismiss yourself from the conflict in a professional and amiable manner and refer them to the appropriate source.

b. With Other Employees – If you find yourself in a conflict with another employee, there are certain channels you must take to avoid an unnecessary escalation of the conflict and possible reprimands. There are many reasons that another employee may choose to accuse you of inappropriate actions or statements. However, the legitimacy of those accusations may prove the accusation to be false and of no concern. If you are being accused of actions which you did commit, whether intentionally or not, the best action you can take to begin with is to own your actions and apologize for the offense, as well as the effect caused to the other person. If done sincerely, this will solve 95% of conflicts that arise in the workplace.

The next step in seeking resolution would be to report the incident to your supervisor, and/or the Fee program manager. In some cases, you may also report the incident to a law enforcement ranger if needed. Be sure to give a full report of the actions that have taken place, even those that are not favorable to you. Sooner or later, it is likely that all aspects of the incident will come out so it's best to present all the facts right up front.

The Supervisor and / or the Fee program manager will in some cases need to mediate the conflict to bring it to an acceptable conclusion. If that cannot be done, then it may need to go to channels higher in authority and responsibility.

c. With Management – Conflict resolution with management can be a difficult process. Again, it is important to avoid escalation of the conflict in any way possible. If you feel that a manager has broken the law or ethical standards toward you, it is important that you have solid ground for this kind of complaint. If you can personally resolve this issue with the management personnel, everyone wins by this decision. If not, then you will need to produce the evidence of your complaint and know for sure that what you have perceived is likely the truth concerning the conflict.

12.9 Stress Management

In the performance of the job of a fee collector, there are many opportunities for days to become stressful. Stress management does not mean to hide away and out of sight the source of conflict and stress, but to deal with it in an appropriate manner that brings results. Stress is brought on many times through regular day to day activities that seem to pile up. Other times it may be brought on by unusual incidents in life that can't be helped. In any type of stress there are ways to combat it so that it doesn't overtake you and rob you of your strength.

12.10 Performance standards – Performance standards are based on the criteria presented to each employee through the Employee Performance Appraisal Plan (DI-3100). The initial presentation of the appraisal plan will be to give notification of standards, involve the employee in the development of standards and to provide training in the Performance Management System.

Critical elements (at least one, but no more than five) must be established for each employee at the start of the performance year. Through these elements, employees are held accountable for work assignments and responsibilities of their position. A critical element is an assignment or responsibility of such importance that Unsatisfactory performance in that element alone would result in a determination that the employee's overall performance is Unsatisfactory.

Sometime around midyear, the employee will have a progress review in which the ongoing performance is discussed. At this time, any means of support the employee may need in order to rise to, or maintain a fully successful level of accomplishment will be discussed.

At the end of the year, the employee will be appraised on the summary rating of the critical standards presented. The employee will be rated on a level of 1 to 5. The following is a summary of the 5 ratings:

Exceptional	4.6 – 5.00 AND No critical element rated lower than "Superior".
Superior	3.6 – 4.59 AND No critical element rated lower than "Fully Successful".
Fully Successful	3.0 – 3.59 AND No critical element rated lower than "Fully Successful".
Minimally Successful	2.0 – 2.99 AND No critical element rated lower than "Minimally Successful".
Unsatisfactory	One or more critical elements rated "Unsatisfactory".

12.11 Position Descriptions

Position Descriptions are filed in the Fee Program Manager's office and can be copied as an employee may have need. It is important that each member of the staff have a copy of their own position description. If that is not issued upon your Enter-On-Duty (EOD) date, please request a copy from your supervisor.

The position description should state the duties that are assigned to the position that you were hired into. Duties outside of that description may on occasions be requested of you but will not be an assignment of duties unless it is to become a regular part of your prescribed duties..

XIII. Safety

13.1. Personal Safety

Safety is # 1 in the priority of duties assigned to each of us. To be sure that everyone is operating in a safe manner from the beginning of their assignments; the following is a requirement of all Fee Collection personnel:

All new employees are required to meet with the safety officer to discuss the following:

- Commitment to the safety program
- Accident reporting requirements
- 48 hour reporting requirement
- Employee safety handbook
- Joshua Tree National Park's Approved Safety Plan
- Employees rights if injured while on duty
- Job Hazard Analysis
- Driving while on duty

Hazard Mitigation

All new employees are expected to mitigate any observed hazards immediately that may cause injury or property damage. This should be done only if the employee can safely mitigate the hazard. After mitigating the hazard the employee should report the hazard to the safety officer.

Commitment to Safety

All new employees should be aware of the superintendent's commitment to safety. The goal of the safety program and support by the superintendent is to minimize risk and hazards to all employees during work. The mission of the park service comes second to an employee's health and safety.

13.2. Visitor Safety

Visitor safety is always an extension of your own personal safety. In considering the safety precautions that you would use, you can relay those same understandings to a visitor who may not know what to expect while visiting the park. During the summer months, one aspect of visitor safety might be concerning wildlife, such as snakes or bees. Visitors often have a curiosity about snakes and the many different types that are found in the park. A good thing to communicate to any visitor asking about them is to simply watch where they are going to put their hands and feet before doing so. Snakebites normally occur when people are not in tune with nature and their surroundings.

Another aspect of visitor safety, especially during summer months is the possibility of finding themselves in an area where bees are swarming. The following information provided by the park's wildlife biologist will be of help to anyone visiting the park in summer time:

Honey bees in Joshua Tree National Park

"Are all these bees Africanized honey bees or European honey bees?"

Well, both. Recent study (Zamora et al. 2008) showed that populations of honey bees in New Mexico contain the genetic material of both Africanized and European types. In California, Africanized honey bees made their first appearance in 1994. By 1999, there were finds in most areas of Imperial, San Diego, Riverside, Orange, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino Counties, southern Kern County and Ventura County. Both variety of bees are considered non-native to the Americas.

Why do they like me so much?

You sweat. A honey bee colony (both Africanized and European) will increase the collection of water (like your sweat) when outside temperatures are high to provide evaporative cooling inside the hive and then decrease the collection when the danger of overheating passes (Kuhnholz and Seeley 1997). This is why we notice increased bee activity around us (for sweat and leaky water bottles) and our cars (water from AC condensation) when the outside temperatures heat up.

But, don't worry, the bees tend not to be aggressive and sting you when out collecting this "cooling" water. However, bees can be really aggressive when you are close to a hive. So, if you notice a lot of bees and/or hear a large buzzing sound, it's time to move away!

What can I do?

Avoid providing water by keeping leaky water bottles and coolers to a minimum.

When in your vehicle, keep stationary idling with the A/C on to a minimum (condensation from AC).

Keep on the look-out for hives and swarms nearby when bees become a nuisance. Bees are infrequently moved unless they establish a hive in a manmade structure and pose some danger to visitors or staff.”

For more information about bees, please see:

<http://bees.ucr.edu/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africanized_bee

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honey_bee

Ref. Michael Vamstad – Joshua Tree National Park Wildlife Biologist

XIV. Remittance and Reconciliation Process – See RM-22, Ch.13

14.1 Identification of all collection points, including honor systems

Collection points consist of two entrance stations, three visitors’ centers, one nature center, one campground ranger station, and six self pay campgrounds. When collecting money bags the Remit Clerk is always accompanied by another Visitor Use Assistant (VUA), or Law Enforcement Ranger for accountability purposes (dual control).

The two entrance stations are West and North. The remit clerk will do the following in collecting money from these safes:

1. Collects money bags from the drum safe within the main safe at both locations.
2. The money bags are checked against the safe log sheet as they are pulled from the drum safe.
3. Each entry is marked once it has been matched to the corresponding money bag.
4. A diagonal line is drawn across all entries pulled, signed, and dated.

The three visitor centers are Cottonwood, Oasis of Mara, and Joshua Tree. The same general procedures as the entrance stations apply for collecting fees at these visitor centers

There are iron rangers located at the dump station and the campground for users to self pay year round. Switch out the full iron ranger with an empty one. If more than one iron ranger is being changed label where each came from using small sticky notes.

The location of the safes and the "Safe Log Sheets" (See Appendix) will be shown to anyone needing to know as they work with the remit clerk in collecting fees from these visitor centers. The one nature center is Black Rock. From October through May Black Rock Nature Center is open and collecting entrance and walk-in camping fees including dump station use. The location of the safe and the safe log sheets will be pointed out during training or assistance with the remit operation.

There is also an iron ranger located at the dump station for users to self pay year round. Switch out the full iron ranger with an empty one. If more than one iron ranger is being changed label where each came from using small sticky notes. Occasionally the self pay drop box located at the nature center is opened so users can self pay during busy months in the fall and spring seasons, however, this is done very rarely.

From June through September the campground is strictly self pay so the drop box is always open. The access point to the drop box is located in the first office from the front counter and behind the refrigerator. Unlock, remove the envelopes, rubber band, and label by writing in pen **BR** on the top envelope. Relock the box and restock the outside holder with self pay envelopes.

The one campground ranger station is Indian Cove. From October through May Indian Cove is open and collecting entrance and walk-in camping fees. The safe is located in the office just to the left if you are coming through the back door. The money bags and safe log sheet are located on one of the top shelves. The remit clerk collects the money bags from the safe and follows the general procedures listed above.

There is a self pay drop box which may be opened so that users may pay when station is closed due to low staffing levels, however, this is done very rarely during the busy months in the fall and springs seasons. From June through September the campground is strictly self pay so the drop box is always open. The access point to the drop box is located in the area of the front counter. Unlock, remove the envelopes, rubber band, and label by writing in pen **IC** on the top envelope. Relock the box and restock the outside holder with self pay envelopes.

The six self pay campgrounds are Cottonwood, White Tank, Belle, Jumbo Rocks, Ryan, and Hidden Valley. Each of these self pay campgrounds has an iron ranger; Jumbo Rocks has two. Cottonwood has been outlined above. The collection protocol for the other five campgrounds is the same. Switch out the full iron ranger with an empty one. If more than one iron ranger is being changed label where each came from using small sticky notes.

14.2 Retention of Deposit & Remittance forms – 6 yrs, 3 mos. Ch.13,2,3

Deposit forms, remittance forms, and any other material containing personal information should be stored in the administration storage room at Black Rock. The storage room is

located through the women's restroom north of the nature center and across the street from campsite #2. In order to access the storage room a master key is needed. The personnel office in Administration can issue this key on a limited basis. Enter the women's restroom and straight ahead is a locked door. This is the entrance to the storage room. Arrange boxes around the walls of the storage room as much as possible. Return the key to the personnel office the same day as it is checked out. Note: Self pay campground envelopes only need to be kept for one year.

14.3 Daily Operations

Each morning download the register information from Comm2000 into the Advantage program. Double click on the Advantage icon on the desktop, then double click the Advantage icon on the desktop to open.

For step by step instructions, see Standard Operating Procedure # 09-10

14.4 Required paperwork

-Shift report - Shift reports should be filled out completely and correctly. Shift reports with mistakes should be brought to the attention of the fee supervisor for corrections and / or for additional training. It is the responsibility of the fee collector to be precise in all aspects of their duties while handling the government's money. The shift report is a compilation of the day's duties and must show a concentrated effort to present the facts and figures in a correct manner.

-Void Sheet - Void sheets must be filled out correctly and signed. If it is not signed it will have to be returned to the VUA to be signed. Write in the 8330-(year code)-remit number in the Remittance box.

-Overage/Shortage form - Correct handling of government funds is a top priority in the job of the Fee Collection Officer. It is understood that sometimes it will be inevitable that a mistake may be made, however it is minimization of those mistakes that is priority in each and every transaction.

The demand of the job sometimes produces a pressured type of environment for the VUA. When traffic is lined up down the road, it is natural to want to move the line as quickly as possible; and to expedite each transaction is important as long as it does not produce errors and the visitor is properly served. When expediting affects the United States Government or the visitor through a shortage or an overage, someone is hurt financially.

For all concerned, it is of most benefit that each transaction is handled carefully with as much time as needed to complete the task properly. An occasional shortage or overage will happen, but an often reoccurrence will have to be addressed through additional training, or sometimes through remedial action if excessive or found to be intentional or through carelessness. The national limit per month is \$200.00. Beyond that, any shortage or

overage per month exceeding the \$200.00 limit will require notification and signature of the Regional Fee Manager.

In the course of a workday when it appears that a shortage or overage may have occurred, it is important to make a note of the likely transaction, with a description of what may have happened. All shortages and overages must be reported through NPS Form 10-583, (Appendix) Documentation of Overage or Shortage of Funds and Request for Waiver. In this form, there is a place for statement or reason for the discrepancy. It is not sufficient to say "Change making error." It is not possible to always know when the discrepancy happened but with thought, it can usually be determined that one particular transaction would have likely been the cause.

The Fee Program Manager keeps a cumulative record of each Fee Collection Officer's shortages and overages. If a discrepancy in funds is approved by the Fee Manager, it must also be approved by the Chief Ranger. In most cases the fee collector will not be liable for a loss due to a shortage, however a recurring pattern of shortage or overage may become a performance issue. In minimal cases, a shortage may be the result of negligence, dishonesty or misconduct.

-Deposit and Remittance Summary Report - The NPS Form 10-567 will normally be used by those who are involved with the remit process. This is a compilation of funds listed for deposit to the bank on NPS Form 10-570. This is an important record that tracks the process of accounting for, and moving funds brought in from the entrance stations, visitor centers and iron rangers. Unless you are working with the remit process, you may not become familiar with this document and its use.

-Bank Deposit Ticket - This is a 3 part form that is used to list currency, coin and checks that are being deposited into the bank after the remit process is complete.

-TGAnet Deposit Ticket - This is a computer generated form that verifies the information given online with the TGAnet service. Once the online Deposit Ticket is created, the pertinent information of that deposit will be printed. This ticket along with the Bank Deposit Ticket will be submitted with the Cash, Coin and Checks at the bank when the deposit is made, sometime during the same day. Primarily the information on the TGAnet Deposit Ticket will consist of the following:

- Deposit Number
- Date presented or mailed to the bank
- The 8-digit Agency Location Code
- The amount of deposit
- The Deposit number and date
- The total of Checks, Money Orders and value of all cash and coins submitted.

XV. Audits – Schedule and Types

15.1 Schedules and Frequency

Frequency of Each Audit Type

Program Integrity		
Type of Audit Activity (all audits are unannounced)	Frequency	Responsibility
Road Audits Form 10-580	Employees who work less than 180 continuous days must be audited at least once. Employees who work more than 180 continuous days must be audited at least twice a year.	Fee program manager, Superintendent's designee, or supervisor, with assistance from law enforcement.
Honor System Compliance (pipe safe, automated fee machine, etc.) Form 10-581	Monthly.	Fee program manager, Superintendent's designee, or supervisor.
Cash Register and Point of Sale Form 10-565	Employees who work less than 180 continuous days must be audited at least twice. Employees who work more than 180 continuous days must be audited at least twice a year.	Fee program manager, Superintendent's designee, or supervisor.
Change Fund	Annually for funds less than \$5,000. Bi-annually for funds more than \$5,000.	Superintendent's designee or supervisor.
Internal Review (see section 6.4)	At least annually, bi-annually if the park collects more than \$125,000 per year. The Superintendent may establish more stringent standards for conducting these reviews.	An Administrative, Budget, or other park staff <i>outside the fee</i> program must conduct this review.

15.2 Types of Audits

Cash Register Audit (NPS Form 10-565)

The cash register audit is a review and verification of receipts, cash, credit card charge receipts, change banks, and accountable stock on hand at the point of sale with the fee collector on duty.

Frequency: Seasonal employees performing fee collection duties must be reviewed at least twice during each period of their employment. Permanent employees must be reviewed at least two times annually.

Road Audit (NPS Form 10-580)

Road audits are used to monitor the performance of fee collection personnel and ensure that visitors entering or exiting the park received and paid for the appropriate receipt. Specific standards for who should conduct road audits will be outlined in the park-specific fee manual. Road audits should be conducted two times yearly for employees working more than 180 continuous days. Seasonal employees should be audited two times each season. The uniformed person conducting the road audit is positioned close to, but out of sight of, the entrance station, keeping in mind employee and visitor safety. A sign is placed near the collection point to notify visitors of a checkpoint ahead. During a 25-30 minute period, each vehicle entering via the station is stopped and asked for their admission pass. All pertinent information is recorded on NPS Form 10-580. After completing the compliance check, the fee supervisor reviews the form for consistency and anomalies, then notifies the fee collector on duty of the audit results. The Fee Manager should receive a copy of each audit.
See SOP 09-11

Honor System Audits (Form 10-581)

Fee collection honor systems are particularly susceptible to fraud and embezzlement. Consequently, honor system programs require diligent audit and quality assurance attention. The following controls can be used to better ensure the integrity of honor system collections.

- **Physical controls:** Physical controls such as dual locking fee receipt containers, automated fee machines, and other types of design items can enhance the integrity of honor systems.
- **Operational controls:** Two employees must be present at all times when funds or envelopes are counted. Dual control can be improved by ensuring that the same two employees are not routinely paired for fee collection activities.
- **Tracking fee payment envelopes:** For honor systems where the visitor uses an envelope to pay a fee the following compliance audit methods may be used to verify that envelopes used for payment and the funds placed in the envelopes are submitted for deposit.

Inventory Audit

Two auditors empty the collection vault, record the contents listed on each envelope, return the sealed envelopes to the pipe safe, and then verify that all the recorded contents are submitted in the deposit.

Seeding – An auditor places extra imprest or change fund cash (sometimes more than would be required for the campsite stay) in a campground envelope in the pipe safe. The auditor then checks to see whether the additions are counted as part of the deposit and remittance. Inconspicuously mark bills and campground envelopes so

that both can be identified during the audit. This seeding will normally take place by a law enforcement ranger.

Inventory – Requires that two auditors empty the collection vault, record the contents listed on the envelope without opening the envelopes, return the sealed envelopes to the box, and then verify that all the recorded contents are submitted in the deposit.

Two forms have been developed to assist the fee manager with honor system audits:

- Honor System Audit, Form 10-581, which is used to conduct an unannounced compliance audit of the person handling honor system deposits.
- Honor System Deposit Report, NPS 10-582, which is used to deposit honor system revenue.

15.3 Unannounced Internal Review

Park staff must conduct an Unannounced Internal Review on the park fee program at least annually (or bi-annually if the fee program collects greater than \$125,000 per year). The Superintendent may establish stricter requirements for conducting these audits.

The audit should identify the system of procedures and internal controls, and include a cash and accountable stock check. If the review reveals a deficiency, a written recommendation to correct the deficiency must be presented to the park Superintendent.

Currently the Unannounced Internal Review of Fee Collection Activities section of AOC's Internal Control Questionnaire form is used for this audit. Check the AOC website, specifically the Internal Control Questionnaire, for more information.

Appendix

a. NPS & Joshua Tree National Park Policies

RM-22 Recreation Fee Guideline

RM 43 – Uniforms

Management Directive JOTR-16 – Uniform Standards

b. Forms

The forms listed in this manual and necessary for daily fee operations are as follows:

OPM Form 71 - Request for Leave or Approved Absence

DI-105, Receipt for Property

NPS Form 10-565 - Cash Register Audit

NPS Form 10-567 - Deposit and Remittance Summary Report

NPS Form 10-570 - Bank Deposit Form

NPS Form - 10-580 - Road Audit

NPS Form 10-581 - Honor System Audit

NPS 10-582 - Honor System Deposit Report
NPS Form 10-583 - Documentation of Overage or Shortage of Funds and Request
for Waiver
Form 10-585 - Fee Collection Officer Designation and Revocation

Joshua Tree National Park Forms

Entrance Fee Waiver for Educational Study
Joshua Tree Form - "Safe log Sheet"
Joshua Tree Form - "Request for Pay Differential"
Register of Void and Refund Transactions form

c. Robbery Response Plan Debrief Record

d. SOPs

SOP# 09-01 – North and West Entrance Station Operations
SOP# 09-02 - Inability to Pay
SOP# 09-03 – Joshua Tree and Oasis Visitor Center Operations
SOP# 09-04 – Cottonwood Visitor Center Operations
SOP# 09-05 - Black Rock Visitor Center Operations
SOP# 09-06 - Datasym Cash Register Operations
SOP# 09-07 - Safe Accountability Transfer Record Operations
SOP# 09-08 - Change of Cashier Operations
SOP# 09-09 - Park Radio Operations
SOP# 09-10 - Remits Daily Operations
SOP# 09-11 - Fee Compliance Road Audits

References: This manual has been compiled by the assistance of the fee staff of Joshua Tree National Park and others as noted. Gratitude for contributions is expressed to the following:

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Don Roberts, Fee Program Manager
Luke Sabala, Safety Officer
Tom Sperry, Fee Collection Officer
Jody Tullis, Fee Collection Officer
Michael Vamstad, Wildlife Biologist, Joshua Tree National Park

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Ref. 11.7 Park Vehicles

<ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/OK/intranet/fnm/GOVGuide.pdf>

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